

Historical Advisory Committee (HAC)
Meeting Minutes June 10, 2015

Meeting held at the Charlotte County Historical Center at Grace Street Annex

Committee Members

Sue Blackwell (57/75)
Emma-Lou Craig (7/8)
Michael Haymans (32/58)
Carol Leonard (3/3)
Dianne Munson (9/16)
Gene Murtha (2/2)
Larry Peck(12/16)
Scot Shively (68/71)

Present

Sue Blackwell
Emma-Lou Craig
Michael Haymans
Dianne Munson
Gene Murtha
Larry Peck
Scot Shively

Not Present

Carol Leonard

BoCC Liaison:

Commissioner Stephen R. Deutsch

Guests

Pat Spence, El Jobean Community League
Valerie Colbert, Hickory Bluff Chapter DAR
Debi Allen, Hickory Bluff Chapter DAR

Staff

Jackie Brown, Historian
Crystal Diff, Programs Coordinator
Lynn Harrell, Archives Assistant
Lanette Hart, Interim Manager Libraries & History

9:05 a.m. Call to Order, Roll Call – Conducted by HAC Chairman Scot Shively. Carol Leonard has an excused absence. Guests were introduced. Motion to approve 05/13/15 meeting minutes by Michael Haymans, second by Emma-Lou Craig. Minutes approved.

Old Business – HAC Vacancy – El Jobean area still open; James Marshall, previous representative, has been invited to rejoin. Second candidate is Pat Spence of El Jobean Community League. Carol Leonard's term expires in September. Appointed to fill at-large vacancy created by former member's resignation, Ms. Leonard will be asked to reapply for full term position.

Southland Cemetery Historical Marker – Dedication ceremony on May 15 drew good turnout with excellent press coverage. Historian Jackie Brown commended Chris Andersch of CC Public Works for attentive, ongoing maintenance of site. Plans for public tours of multiple cemetery sites are in progress.

CCHC Focus Group Meeting – The first Focus Group meeting was held May 19 with about 20 (stakeholder) attendees present. Discussion included long term needs, archival/museum initiatives, cooperative efforts among related groups, educational outreach, heritage tourism impact. Attendees were asked to complete CCHC survey and spread the word about upcoming public planning meetings. Michael Haymans will facilitate public meetings on June 16 & June 18. Scot Shively will facilitate meeting on June 17. Note takers are needed for those meetings. A second focus group meeting was suggested for July. Long Range Planning committee report is due by August.

New Business – CCHC online survey – Survey Monkey ended June 8, about 80 responses were received online and through hardcopy distribution, results 99% favorable. Majority age group of responders appeared to be 45-64 years of age. Citizen comments and suggestions are still being compiled. Mr. Haymans expressed disappointment at number of responses, given county population; discussion ensued re: overall citizen "apathy" and the need to raise awareness of resources. Ms. Craig brought up the difficulty in accessing Historical Center links via County Website, an ongoing problem since Historical is not included in department listings and the online historical collections were omitted from the "Popular Links" menu. Commissioner Deutsch offered to look into the issue; Ms. Hart suggested a quick fix by amending the "Library" tab to read "Library & History" in the menu. She will pursue that option.

Related topics of discussion were outreach programs, the need to engage county youth groups, participation in school programs, incentives for students, annual History Fair, cooperative projects with other counties and local organizations, Junior Leadership Charlotte and similar youth initiatives.

Historical Development/Reviews – All bldg./demo applications reviewed due to buffer zone proximity were released by staff. Demolition of former Historical Center bldg on Bayshore Rd is complete.

Historical Staff report – Programs: Emancipation Day programs in cooperation with Blanchard House Museum went very well (approx. 150 attendees), reenactment by USCT, school tent exhibition, etc. drew much interest. Frank Desguin's presentation at East Elementary focused on Punta Gorda's past was also well received with approx. 150 students participating. Upcoming programs were discussed, including possible change of venue for "USO" event, recently substituted for previously planned "Speakeasy" (prohibition era) program to fit with state "Victory Florida" initiative (marking end of WWII).

Archives – Processing of textiles completed at Englewood, backlog of small collections in process. Processing of Suncoast Media donation (bound newspaper volumes) at Grace Street ahead of schedule. Punta Gorda Garden Club items received on loan for digitization, will begin processing in July. Five new small collections (objects & archival materials) accessioned, one photo collection (Witherell family) loaned for digitization, scanned and returned.

Historical Markers – The PG Army Airfield marker has been ordered, dedication tentatively scheduled for August 14, 10 a.m., to coincide with opening of exhibit at MCRL. Price quote for "mini-marker" for Hickory Bluff (Rowland Ave) Cemetery was presented in member's packet. A map & tour guide of existing site markers in the County is planned, to include: county, state, regional and private markers. HAC members were asked to make note of markers in their areas to add to list. Sites eligible for future markers were discussed, including Bayshore (Parmely) site, Harbor Walk (bridge construction), Calusa history, etc. Erecting flagpoles at Southland and Hickory Bluff cemetery sites was also discussed, deemed not feasible at this time because of difficulty in complying with statutes re: proper display of flags.

Citizen Input – Valerie Colbert and Debi Allen, Hickory Bluff Chapter DAR, informed HAC of DAR interest in participating at events focused on Hickory Bluff (Charlotte Hbr) history; cemetery site marker, etc.

Member Input and Announcements –

- Michael Haymans – shared original folk song about Sallie Jones.
- Gene Murtha – Fundraising for PG History Center continuing, discussed creation of master mailing list of community programs.
- Emma-Lou Craig – Walking tour map of Dearborn Street district in the works.
- Sue Blackwell – new event, Brews and Blues festival, to take place at PG History Park
- Dianne Munson – CCHC Society donations
- Scot Shively –
- Larry Peck – will serve as informal Sons of Confederate Veterans contact

Adjournment – 10:35 am

Next HAC Meeting:

HAC monthly meeting- 9 A.M., Wednesday, July 8, 2015, to be held at the Grace Street Annex, 514 East Grace Street, Punta Gorda FL, 33950

cc:

Commissioner Ken Doherty
Commissioner Stephen R. Deutsch
Commissioner Bill Truex,
Commissioner Christopher Constance

Commissioner Tricia Duffy
Ray Sandroock, County Administrator
Kelly Shoemaker, Deputy County Administrator
Tommy Scott, Director, Community Svcs Dept.